

# **The Strategic Plan**

## of the

# Watershed Management Bureau

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**LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL**

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**

Inter-Department Communication

**DATE:** May 2, 2002

**FROM:** Paul M. Currier, Administrator, Watershed Management Bureau

**TO:** G. Dana Bisbee, Assistant Commissioner

**THROUGH:** Harry T. Stewart, Director, Water Division

**SUBJECT:** Watershed Management Bureau Strategic Plan

I am pleased to submit to you *The Strategic Plan of the Watershed Management Bureau*. The *Strategic Plan* represents eighteen months of active participation by bureau staff. This included bureau meetings to develop the mission statement and goals, followed by more detailed work of nine goal teams. The purpose of the goal teams was to develop objectives and deliverables that would be classified as new initiatives or improvements to existing work to be accomplished in the next two to three years. The nine goals cover activities related to internal improvements, such as fostering an efficient and inspiring work environment and improving communications as well as outward objectives which will guide the Bureau in the future, such as the development of a watershed approach, improving monitoring and assessment, protecting aquatic communities and restoring impaired waterbodies.

I am also happy to report that the *Strategic Plan* has been linked to the Activities and Deliverable in the Measures Tracking and Reporting System (MTRS), which will allow the Bureau to track progress on a regular basis. Detailed self-evaluations will occur bi-annually. The work accomplished to date will also complement the strategic planning work that is ongoing at the Department level, as all of the Bureau's activities can be linked directly to the objectives and/or goals of the Department.

If you have any questions or comments please feel free to contact me.

## INTRODUCTION

On June 14, 1999 Water Division Director Harry Stewart announced the creation of the Watershed Management Bureau as a key component of his plan to reorganize the Water Division. According to the Director, "These changes promote a watershed approach for all DES water program activities. Programs focused on evaluating and protecting lakes, rivers, and estuaries by activities such as sampling, data management, and outreach are all integrated within one bureau. This will better enable the assessment and management of surface water related programs as an integrated whole on a watershed basis."

But what did a "watershed approach" mean and exactly how was the Bureau to assess and manage "surface water related programs as an integrated whole on a watershed basis?"

In the fall of 2000, the Watershed Management Bureau set out to answer these questions through a bottom-up strategic planning effort, facilitated by Peter Gamache of the Division of Personnel. This was no small task, as there are 31 defined "Programs" within the Bureau (listed below).

### Watershed Management Bureau Programs

Surface Water Quality Assessment and Reporting	Pool and Spa Inspections
401 Water Quality Certifications	Rivers Management and Protection
Beach Inspections	Rivers Ambient Monitoring
Biomonitoring	Shellfish
Boat Inspections	Smart Growth
Clean Lakes	Tidal Water Quality Monitoring
Clean Vessel Act	Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)
Ecological Risk Assessment	Volunteer Lake Assessment
Exotic Species	Volunteer River Assessment
Fish Tissue Monitoring	Watershed Assistance Section Education and Outreach
Malformed Frog Surveys	Water Quality Data Management
Instream Flow Protection	Water Quality Standards
Lake Assessments	Watershed Investigations
Lakes Management and Protection	Watershed Protection
Limnology Center	Watershed Restoration
Permit Evaluations for NPDES and Pesticide Application	

Between October 3, 2000 and January 3, 2001, four half-day meetings were held to lay the foundation for the Strategic Plan. All Bureau members were invited to attend. Discussion began with a review of the Department's mission statement, guiding principals, and goals, in order to ensure that the Bureau's mission and goals would support those of the Department. The product of the meetings was agreement on a Bureau Mission Statement and a set of nine goals and associated objectives to achieve the Bureau mission. This product is presented in the following pages.

Over the next several months, nine separate "goal teams" were established to develop detailed action items for the objectives associated with each goal. In addition, each team was responsible for identifying measurable outputs for new action items. Although many of the bureau's routine activities fit into the goals and objectives, the focus was on new and innovative action items. The action items for each objective have been reviewed by all bureau members and have been incorporated into a DES database designed to track programs and our work outputs. Since action items change relatively frequently, they are not presented in this document.

The Strategic Plan will guide the Watershed Management Bureau over the next two to three years. Each year, the Watershed Management Bureau will review the Strategic Plan to determine progress made and if revisions are necessary to better achieve the Bureau's mission.

## MISSION STATEMENT

*To protect and improve the health and function of New Hampshire's waters and watersheds for human and ecological benefit.*

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### **Goal 1. Provide a coordinated public outreach program that includes education, technical assistance, and a mechanism for volunteerism.**

- Objective 1: Identify, coordinate, and support education and outreach activities.
- Objective 2: Encourage volunteerism through strengthening volunteer-based programs.
- Objective 3: Provide training and assistance opportunities which both address the public's needs and enhance the Bureau's programs.
- Objective 4: Create, revise, and disseminate public information and guidance materials using all available media.

### **Goal 2. Improve the quality, consistency, and accessibility of water-related data.**

- Objective 1: Increase staff GIS use and capabilities.
- Objective 2: Develop and maintain applications and procedures to support Bureau's data management needs.
- Objective 3: Improve accessibility of data to the public.
- Objective 4: Ensure that data is accurate, compatible, and consistent with other bureaus.

### **Goal 3. Provide a surface water monitoring, assessment, and reporting program that addresses the needs of DES, the public, and all regulatory requirements.**

- Objective 1: Conduct long-term water quality monitoring programs (i.e., programs that are regularly conducted on an annual basis).
- Objective 2: Prepare reports on the status of water quality.
- Objective 3: Conduct water quality monitoring and analyses for the development of water quality standards.

Objective 4: Develop a comprehensive monitoring strategy and an assessment methodology that fulfills State and federal requirements (i.e., Section 305(b) and 303(d) of the CWA).

Objective 5: Conduct special, relatively short term water quality studies (i.e., studies that last no more than approximately 3 years).

**Goal 4. Improve communication and the exchange of information.**

Objective 1: Improve communications within the Watershed Management Bureau.

Objective 2: Improve communications between the Watershed Management Bureau and other bureaus/divisions within the Department.

Objective 3: Improve communications between the Watershed Management Bureau and public and private organizations outside the Department as well as the general public.

**Goal 5. Foster a professional, cooperative, efficient, inspiring, and physically comfortable work environment.**

Objective 1: Foster a cooperative, enjoyable, team atmosphere within the Bureau.

Objective 2: Foster professional development within the workplace.

Objective 3: Provide a physically comfortable and productive work environment.

**Goal 6. Develop and implement a watershed management approach that involves citizens, local/state/federal governments, and non-government organizations.**

Objective 1: Establish a system to track statewide data, outreach efforts, and projects by watershed.

Objective 2: Develop a watershed management approach.

Objective 3: Implement a watershed management approach.

**Goal 7. Restore impaired waterbodies and protect aquatic communities using a watershed management approach.**

Objective 1: Install and evaluate stormwater BMPs, streambank restoration techniques, agricultural BMPs, and stream restoration methods.

Objective 2: Develop framework for riparian restoration and enhancement.

Objective 3: Develop a stormwater utility guidance document for municipalities.

**Goal 8. Foster partnerships that provide support and coordination to local entities in their efforts to monitor, protect, and restore waterbodies.**

Objective 1: Determine the need for watershed coordination in the Connecticut, Saco, and Androscoggin basins.

Objective 2: Spend restoration funds on the most significant water quality impairments.

Objective 3: Increase development and implementation of lake and river management plans.

**Goal 9. Develop and/or support laws, rules and policies that are consistent with the bureau and department missions.**

Objective 1: Ensure the existing laws, rules and policies for which the Bureau is responsible are current, are being properly implemented, are being enforced, and are achieving the desired result.

Objective 2: Ensure proposed legislation is consistent with the Bureau's mission, laws, rules and policies.

Objective 3: Work cooperatively with other agencies, organizations to develop or revise appropriate legislation and policies.